



Building human resilience: The role of public health preparedness and response as an adaptation to climate change

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Abstract:

Global climate change will increase the probability of extreme weather events, including heatwaves, drought, wildfire, cyclones, and heavy precipitation that could cause floods and landslides. Such events create significant public health needs that can exceed local capacity to respond, resulting in excess morbidity or mortality and in the declaration of disasters. Human vulnerability to any disaster is a complex phenomenon with social, economic, health, and cultural dimensions. Vulnerability to natural disasters has two sides: the degree of exposure to dangerous hazards (susceptibility) and the capacity to cope with or recover from disaster consequences (resilience). Vulnerability reduction programs reduce susceptibility and increase resilience. Susceptibility to disasters is reduced largely by prevention and mitigation of emergencies. Emergency preparedness and response and recovery activities—including those that address climate change—increase disaster resilience. Because adaptation must occur at the community level, local public health agencies are uniquely placed to build human resilience to climate-related disasters. This article discusses the role of public health in reducing human vulnerability to climate change within the context of select examples for emergency preparedness and response.

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Resource Description

Early Warning System:

resource focus on systems used to warn populations of high temperatures, extreme weather, or other elements of climate change to prevent harm to health

A focus of content

Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Extreme Weather Event, Food/Water Security, Food/Water Security, Human Conflict/Displacement, Precipitation, Sea Level Rise, Temperature

Extreme Weather Event: Drought, Flooding, Hurricanes/Cyclones, Landslides, Wildfires

Food/Water Security: Agricultural Productivity

Temperature: Extreme Heat

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

Global or Unspecified

Health Impact:

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Infectious Disease, Injury, Mental Health/Stress, Morbidity/Mortality, Respiratory Effect

Infectious Disease: Foodborne/Waterborne Disease, General Infectious Disease, Vectorborne Disease

Foodborne/Waterborne Disease: General Foodborne/Waterborne Disease

Vectorborne Disease: General Vectorborne

Mental Health Effect/Stress: Stress Disorder

Respiratory Effect: Asthma, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

Medical Community Engagement:

resource focus on how the medical community discusses or acts to address health impacts of climate change

A focus of content

Mitigation/Adaptation:

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

Resource Type:

format or standard characteristic of resource

Policy/Opinion, Review

Resilience:

capacity of an individual, community, or institution to dynamically and effectively respond or adapt to shifting climate impact circumstances while continuing to function

A focus of content

Timescale:

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified

Vulnerability/Impact Assessment:

resource focus on process of identifying, quantifying, and prioritizing vulnerabilities in a system

A focus of content